

**RANGE EXTENSION FOR THE INTRODUCED BLIND SNAKE, *RAMPHOTYPHLOPS BRAMINUS* (TYPHLOPIDAE) IN QUEENSLAND.** *Memoirs of the Queensland Museum* 43(2): 782. 1999.- The typhlopidae snake *Ramphotyphlops braminus* has a wide distribution in tropical and subtropical regions of the world. It is Australia's only introduced snake, and the 2 known populations in Darwin (NT) and Torres Strait (Qld) probably arrived from SE Asia in cargo (Wilson & Knowles, 1988). *Ramphotyphlops braminus* is an efficient disperser because it is closely associated with humans, is frequently transported in cargo, and is parthenogenetic (McDowell, 1974). Here we report a population of *R. braminus* from Townsville, N Queensland (19°17'S 146°47'E).

On 3 October 1998, a specimen (QMJ67248) was collected under a flowerpot in the Townsville suburb of Heatley (Fig.



FIG. 1. *Ramphotyphlops braminus* from Townsville, NE Queensland.

1). On 10 October 1998, a second specimen (QMJ67249) was accidentally killed in the same garden, and on 24 October 1998, 2 additional specimens were collected from beneath flowerpots in this garden. Another specimen collected from the Townsville suburb of Condon on 21 October 1998, has been deposited with the Queensland Department of Environment and Heritage.

The Townsville specimens are identified as *R. braminus* and distinguished from all other Australian typhlopidae snakes (Cogger, 1992) by the following combination of characters: small and slender (<150mm total length); midbody scales 20; nasal cleft joining preocular; head scales with numerous tiny tubercles; prominent whitish glands between head scales. In life dark purplish brown dorsally grading to pale brown ventrally. In preservative dark chocolate brown dorsally grading to pale brown ventrally, anterior edges of scales darker brown. Chin, cloaca and tail spine white.

These records represent a large range extension for this species, and only the third known population in Australia. The close association with suburban gardens, and in particular with flowerpots, is typical of this species. The population is almost certainly a recent arrival. This is the first record of this species from the Heatley locality, where the senior author has resided for 10 years.

#### Literature Cited

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